Noor Series for Children

Sunlight

Part 3

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(May Allaah Protect him)

Noor Series

Part 3

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Book Three – Sunlight

About the Book

This is the third and final part of the Noor Series of children's books, which are aimed at assisting parents and care-givers of children to effectively inculcate upright character and Islaamic behaviour in Muslim children. Like the previous two books in the series, this book includes exciting stories that will appeal to every child. In addition to this, the book also includes questions that will increase a child's general knowledge of Islaamic personalities and of general world facts.

Riddles and jokes have also been included to further captivate the interest of every young reader and to keep them reading and expanding their world of knowledge.

This third book includes many interesting stories with moral lessons, as well as the incident of the people of the elephant, which is related in the Qur'aan as well as the story of some Sahabah ψ. Every story teaches invaluable lessons of life and character traits that every human being needs to imbibe within himself.

The series has been successful in imparting valuable lessons to little children and providing an alternative to the barrage of non-Islaam literature targeting our young Muslim generation.

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نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْم

The duty of man is to make an effort, but for the fruits of this effort to become apparent is the work of Allaah. It is also a common principle that Allaah never puts the efforts of a person to waste. We therefore appeal to all parents, teachers and guardians to spare no efforts in nurturing their children, students and wards to the best of their ability. This may be done by:

1. Explaining important matters to them with kindness and in the best possible manner
2. Exercising patience when they err instead of reprimanding them
3. To make sincere du'aa for their guidance

Inshaa Allaah, these efforts will never be wasted and our children will become a source of success and happiness for us in both worlds.

Mufakkirul Islaam Moulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi رحمه الله observes, "Ulema agree on the fact that there is nothing more effective for the nurturing of children than true and anecdotal stories. If these stories teach Imaan and Deen, than they will serve as a primary Madrasah for children, from which they will learn good habits and be able to inculcate a most pristine character."[1]

It is with this purpose in mind that our institute has started the new Noor Series, which has been prepared with children in mind. The Noor Series is a compilation of stories that are Deeni, educational, exciting and angled to develop good character. By the grace of Allaah, this is the third and final part of the series, and is called Sunlight. The first and second parts were titled "Rays of Sunshine" and "Bouquet" respectively.

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[1] *Qasas min Taarekhil Islaami*.

We appeal to all parents ensure that their children get these books and are encouraged to read them. Inshaa Allaah, these books will go a long way to contribute to the proper upbringing of your children.

Apart from this, the following benefits will also be accrued:

1. Children will be saved from boredom and from wasting time
2. They will be encouraged to work hard
3. They will encouraged to think more positively and constructively
4. They will be protected against developing an inferiority complex and their minds will be stimulated
5. They will learn speak and write better

Our final request to all readers is to remember all the members of our institute in their du’aas. In addition to this, we will be thankful if you alert us of any errors you may notice in the books.

Was Salaam

Associates of Daarul Huda Institute

Foreword

By Moulana Doctor Abdur Razzaaq Iskandar Sahib دامت برکاته

نَحْمَدُهُ وَ نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْم أَمَّا بَعْدُ

The Noor Series and Light Series that have been developed to develop the character of children is an excellent effort. May Allaah accept the publications and efforts of the Daarul Huda Institute and make them a means of guidance for the Ummah. Aameen.

Abdur Razzaaq Iskandar

30/05/1428
16/06/2007

Sheru

Sheru and his brother were busy playing and jumping about when their mother called for them.

“Come and eat, you two,” she said as she looked outside.

Sheru and his brother sprang up and raced back into their home. Their mother had prepared a rabbit meal for them today and the two boys hastily washed their hands to start the meal.

This was the home of the king of the jungle. It was located in a mountain in the centre of the jungle and had a flowing spring close to the entrance, when the animals of the jungle came to the spring to drink, they became easy prey for the king and his lioness queen.

As Sheru and his brother sat down to eat, their father also joined them. As the father picked his teeth clean after the meal, he mentioned that a caravan of humans had arrived in the jungle that day and warned the children not to go near them.

When he left, Sheru asked his mother, “Are these humans dangerous creatures?”

“Oh yes!” their mother, “They are the most dangerous of all creatures, you children had better not go anywhere near them, or they will catch you. Do you understand?” Sheru and his brother both shook their heads.

That night, Sheru could not sleep since the thought of seeing a human being did not want to leave his mind. “If only I can get just a quick glance at a human and then run off before they can catch me,” he thought.

His mind was in turmoil. Although he did not want to disobey his parents, he really wanted to see a human. The thought persisted, “If only I can get just a quick glance at a human and then run off before they can catch me.”

Unable to bear it any longer, he made up his mind to sneak out and get a quick look at a human. Later that night, he made sure that his two brothers were sound asleep before sneaking out of the cave and silently closing the door behind him. There was not much time left for sunrise as Sheru hurried over to the area where humans usually stayed.

As he hurried along, Sheru thought, "Soon I shall be the king of this jungle and all will fear me. I need to see what this human being looks like since he is so very dangerous that my parents do not want me to even see them."

As he drew closer to the camp where the humans were staying, Sheru saw a horse. Unsure what this was, he asked, "Are you a human?"

"Me, a human?" the horse asked, "How can I be a human when I can do nothing again a human? All day I have a rope around my neck and live tied in a stable. Humans use me whenever they want to and I can do nothing when I want to."

"Oh Allaah!" Sheru thought to himself, "What a curse these humans must be?"

He then walked ahead, where he saw a camel. Noting that it was larger than the horse, he thought that this must be a human. "Are you a human?" he asked the camel.

Hearing the word 'human' made the camel fright and he said, "Do not think that I am a human just because I am so large. What am I in front of the human? Thousands of my brothers are tied together with a rope and led wherever the human wants us to go. Even one of their children can pull the ripe and we will have to go wherever he leads us. They place heavy loads upon our backs and sit on us whenever they please. No matter how much we may protest, they do whatever they want with us. In fact, sometimes two or three of them sit on us and when they put a carriage on us, we have to carry even more of them. We just have to do as they say."

"Only Allaah knows how large and powerful these humans must be!" Sheru wondered.

As Sheru walked around a few tree, he suddenly saw a huge elephant. Looking up at the massive creature, he was convinced that it must be a human. Swallowing deep, he took the courage to ask, “Dear Sir! You must be a human?”

Staring at him with wide eyes, the elephant gasped, “Are you talking about that horrible creature? The human can tie horses and camels with ropes, but their ropes are not strong enough for me. However, even though they cannot tie me with ropes, they still have complete control over me.”

This shocked Sheru immensely and he thought, “I cannot imagine how powerful and large these humans must be that all these animals fear them so much. Perhaps I should heed my parents warning and not go any further.”

He therefore started walking back home. However, he took a different route home and happened to come across the child of a carpenter, who was busy sawing through a large log. Every time he sawed through a section, he drove a peg through the cut so that it did not close up again.

The thought did not even cross Sheru’s mind that this small creature could be a human, so he asked, “Sir. Do you know what a human is?”

The boy looked at Sheru and asked, “Why do you want to know what a human is?”

“Oh, I just wanted to meet a human,” Sheru replied as he walked closer.

“I am a human,” the boy replied.

“What!” Sheru could not believe his ears, “You are a human?”

“I certainly am,” the boy said loudly.

Looking at the small size of the boy, Sheru said in a degrading tone, “You are so small that I could kill you with one swipe of my paw. The horse, camel and elephant all made me scared for nothing!” Saying this, Sheru walked closer to the boy.

The boy knew that he would have to think very fast to save himself, so he said, “Wait a minute, brave lion! You are indeed large and very strong, while I am a small weakling. Will you be kind enough to show me your tremendous strength and do something that a weak person like me cannot do? After doing this one thing, you may then do to me what you please.”

Flattered by the words of the boy, Sheru agreed and said, “Alright! What is it that you need help with?”

The boy replied, “I want to remove the peg from that large log. Would you please use your strong paws to hold the two sawn parts open so that I may remove it?”

Sheru was so happy with the praises that the boy heaped on him that did as told without thinking about it. He placed both his paws between the parts of the log. As soon as the boy removed the peg, the two sections of the log snapped together and Sheru’s paws were trapped between them. Sheru screamed in pain as boy laughed and said, “Now you know us humans better!”

It was then that Sheru regretted not listening to his parents and admonished himself for underestimating humans.

Dear friends! We learn that there is always benefit in listening to one’s parents and elders. We must make a firm intention to always listen to them and obey everything they tell us so that they may be pleased with us and also so that we remain safe from all harm.

The Return

“You have failed again, Faraaz!”

These words echoed through the house as Faraaz stood with his head bowed and his father stood before him with the report card in his hand.

“Son!” his father continued, “If you continue worrying only about playing and sleeping and continue neglecting your work, you will continue failing every examination. You will therefore need to start making an effort so that you can pass the final exam with good results. I don’t know what has happened to you. You were such a bright boy before.”

Although it seemed as if Faraaz was listening to his father all the time, his mind was really in the cricket match he would be playing the next day. Faraaz was the captain of the team and the match was to take place at the cricket grounds opposite his house. The grounds and pitch needed to be prepared and good bats and balls were needed for the match. These were Faraaz’s duties and it was all that occupied his mind.

“What do you think about that, Faraaz?” his father asked.

Because Faraaz had heard nothing of what his father was saying, he asked, “What was that, Dad?”

“What!” father exclaimed, “I was speaking all this while and you heard nothing? Where was your mind?” His father then started to scold him angrily and finally got up and left in a fury.

When his father returned that evening, his anger had abated and he was much calmer. He then continued to explain to Faraaz how he was to behave and perform at school. However, Faraaz did not care what his father had to say and, when his father was done, he merely got up and left for the cricket ground without even telling his mother.

Faraaz was the only child of his parents, who wanted him to have a good education and become someone important one day. However,

Faraaz got involved in the company of some boys in school who had no intention of learning in school. They attended school only to pass time. Faraaz therefore became just like them. When they finished school, they took a ball and played in the park until Maghrib. Thereafter, they returned home to play games on the computer until late in the evening. Although Faraaz did not have a computer at first, he pestered his parents until they were forced to get him one.

When Faraaz reached the ground that day, Kaashif and Nadeem were already waiting there. Kaashif and Nadeem had just arrived at the school that year, but were already disliked by all because of their bad habits. However, they somehow managed to make friends with Faraaz and were making him just like them.

As Faraaz came towards them, Kaashif and Nadeem stood up. "You are very late today," Kaashif said.

"You know how it is when…" Faraaz stopped himself from mentioning that his father had been reprimanding him because the two would then start to make fun of him. He therefore changed the subject and said, "Come, let us go get some balls and a bat for tomorrow's match."

Guessing that Faraaz had changed the subject, Kaashif and Nadeem merely looked at each other without saying anything. They then walked off to the shopping mall, where Faraaz remembered that his father had taught him the du'aa to be recited in a shopping area. However, he had not shopped with his father for a long time and had forgotten the du'aa. This made him sad and, as he was still thinking about the loss, they were entering the store which stocked the goods they needed.

Because the storekeeper knew Faraaz, he took out the bats and balls to show him as soon as they entered. They selected and bought what they needed and by the time they reached home, it was already time for the Maghrib salaah.

When they reached their homes, Faraaz told his friends that he needed to leave since his father would be expecting him. "Alright," they said, "But don't forget to come early for the match tomorrow morning. There are things that we will still have to do."

"Of course," Faraaz said as he left.

When he was gone, Kaashif and Nadeem smiled with each other. “Now we have the chance,” Nadeem whispered to Kaashif.

“Yes,” Kaashif replied, “I shall take him home tomorrow. In the meantime, you call them to come and collect their goods.”

“But how will you get him to your house?” Nadeem asked.

“Don’t worry about that,” Kaashif replied, “You know how crazy he is for computer games and that he will not even listen to his father when it comes to that. That will be the perfect excuse to get him.”

Nadeem laughed as he said, “And was us who made him so crazy about it.” They both then laughed loudly.

Kaashif and Nadeem were really involved in the slave trade. They were agents for people who kidnapped children and sold them to slave traders. These slave traders then broke the limbs of these children and forced them to beg from people. These traders search for children in schools who do not obey their parents and who do what they want. They then used them as agents and paid them good sums of money every month to befriend children and to get them involved in play and games. They then lured them to some place, where they telephone the traders to come and capture them. The children are then taken away and never seen again.

Faraaz was to become the latest victim.

When Faraaz returned home that evening, his heart felt very heavy. He was disappointed with himself for causing so much of hurt to his father. He remembered the verse of the Qur'aan that the Imaam of their Masjid had recited. The verse read, “Do not even say ‘Uf!’ to them (your parents), never rebuke them and always speak kindly to them”.[1]

Faraaz’s eyes filled with tears as he thought of what he was doing. This realisation came because Faraaz was really a very good boy whose good heart had been covered in a veil because of the bad company he had kept. This company prevented him from valuing his parents.

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[1] Surah Bani Israa'eel, verse 23.

When he got home, Faraaz went straight to his room and lay on his bed. He was too frightened to meet his father. By the time his father returned home and went to Faraaz's bedroom, the boy was already fast asleep. His father then left him and went to bed himself.

When the sun rose the following morning, Faraaz was eager to ask his father for forgiveness. On the other hand, Kaashif and Nadeem were eagerly awaiting Faraaz's arrival so that they could put their plan in action.

Faraaz was still having breakfast when the bell rang. "Who is it?" Faraaz asked.

"It's Kaashif!" came the reply.

When Faraaz went to the door to let Kaashif in, he found Nadeem with him. "Come along," Nadeem said, "I got this new computer game CD last night, which is really fantastic. I was going to tell you about it last night, but I forgot. Let us go to my house quickly and I shall show it to you."

"I don't think that I will be joining you guys today," Faraaz said, "I have made up my mind to give up games and matches to concentrate on my studies.

Seeing his efforts go wasted, Nadeem tried again and said, "You have no idea how great this new CD is! You have to come and see it at least once."

"Come along, friend!" Nadeem said as he pulled Faraaz by the hand, "Exams are still far away and you have plenty of time to study."

"Alright then," Faraaz said as he gave in, "I need to get my shoes first."

He then went indoors to get his shoes. As he carried them in his hand, he passed by his mother and said, "I am going with Nadeem and Kaashif to their house and will be back soon." Although he usually did not tell his mother where he was going lately, he did this time.

"Alright, dear," his mother replied, "Don't be too long."

“Will he not tell his parents that he is going out with us?” Kaashif asked Nadeem worriedly.

“He never tells them where he is off to,” Nadeem assured him.

When Faraaz arrived, the three went off Nadeem’s house, which was in an old area of the town and some distance away from where Faraaz lived. Faraaz had never been to Nadeem’s house before.

As they walked in to the old and run-down area, Faraaz asked in surprise, “Is this where you live?”

“Kaashif and I live alone here,” Nadeem replied, “Our family is no longer here.”

When they reached the old house, Kaashif took out a key and opened the lock. As Faraaz and Nadeem stepped inside, Kaashif said, “I am going to get us something to eat.” He then disappeared in a flash.

Faraaz looked carefully around the house, which was covered in dust and secured with bars on all the windows. When he saw this, Faraaz started to panic and said, “Why don’t you just bring the CD to school. I think I had better be leaving.”

However, Nadeem calmly said, “Alright. I’m sorry that you had to come to our house for the first when it is so dirty. Just wait a short while until Kaashif bring us something to drink.”

In the meantime, Kaashif had already phoned two men from the slave traders and was already on his way home with some juice and some powdered drug that would make Faraaz fall unconscious.

“Look!” Nadeem shouted as he looked outside, “Here comes Kaashif already.”

“Sorry to keep you waiting,” Kaashif apologised as he entered the house, “Wait just there and I will bring the juice I bought.”

He then went into the kitchen and poured out the juice, taking care to mix the powder properly into Faraaz's juice. He then served the juice to Faraaz and it was not long before Faraaz lost consciousness.

The knock on the door was a harsh one. "Come in," Nadeem shouted as the two slave traders walked in.

"Is the prey here," they asked.

"Here he is," Nadeem said as he pointed to the unconscious Faraaz lying on the floor.

"Was it difficult?" one of the men asked.

"Difficult?" Nadeem boasted, "Not for us. It was easy. Where's the money?"

The man took out a bundle of notes and handed it over to Nadeem.

Nadeem started to count the money as the two men lifted Faraaz up and took him into the car they had parked nearby. They then sped off.

"We will have to start looking for more prey," Nadeem said as he handed half of the money over to Kaashif, "And we will find him soon enough." They smiled at each other.

The men who had taken Faraaz away belonged to a gang of human traffickers. As they did with all their victims, they planned to take Faraaz out of town, but needed to wait for the darkness of night to do this. They therefore hid their car in an abandoned garage with Faraaz still lying unconscious inside.

Faraaz's mother was worried. It was already time for Maghrib and Faraaz had not returned home. She had already found out from the boys at the ground, but none of them had seen Faraaz all day. When Faraaz's father returned home that evening, he immediately asked where Faraaz was.

"I have no idea," she replied, "He left this morning and said that he would be back soon. He has not returned since."

Faraaz's father was also worried and immediately went out to search for Faraaz and to make enquiries about him.

In the meanwhile, Nadeem and Kaashif were delighted with their earnings. "We should search for the next prey in the same school," Nadeem said.

"But won't that be dangerous?" Kaashif asked.

Nadeem brushed off the concern and said, "Why should it be dangerous? All we need to do is to make another boy disobedient towards his parents and tell him that they are oppressing him by making him study all the time when he could rather be enjoying fun and games."

"Alright then," Kaashif agreed, "We will then have to return to school and make even more money."

Faraaz's mother was impatiently waiting for her husband to return with some news. As soon as he walked in after 10 pm, she immediately jumped up and asked, "Do you have any news?"

"Nothing, I'm afraid," he replied, "We will have to inform the police about this."

"Yes, we should do that," she agreed, "Tell them that Faraaz was last with those two boys from his class. What were their names?" she thought hard for a while, before she exclaimed, "Yes! Nadeem and Kaashif. They came here and Faraaz left with them."

Faraaz's father then telephoned the police.

Faraaz started to rouse. He felt drowsy and had terrible pains in his legs. "Where am I?" he thought, "What happened to me?"

The intense pains in his legs were caused by the way in which his legs were bent under him, so he slowly straightened them out. He then remembered going to the old house with Nadeem and Kaashif and drinking the juice. "But why?" he thought, "Why did they drug me?"

He then glanced at his watch. It was already ten thirty at night. He knew that his parents would be worried sick by then. He therefore slowly raised his head to look outside the car windows. He had hardly looked out when he immediately dropped his head down again. There were many men outside patrolling the area and carrying guns. “How would he escape?”

He was still thinking about the situation when he heard two men approaching the car and get in. Faraaz pretended to be still unconscious and overheard someone saying to them, “It has all been arranged. You may take him away and no one will stop you on the way.” Faraaz now understood that he was being taken out of town and needed to escape as soon as possible.

The two men drove off and had driven a distance when the car started to slow down and the driver said, “I am starving! We need to stop at this restaurant to get something to eat.”

The driver then parked the car. “What are we to with him?” the other man asked, pointing towards Faraaz.

“Let’s leave him in the car,” the driver replied, “I doubt he can go anywhere.”

They then got out of the car and left. Faraaz waited until he could not hear their footsteps before making any move. He then slowly peeked out of the window and looked about. Certain that they were out of sight, he quickly opened the door and walked off as silently as he could. As soon as he had gained distance between himself and the car, he started to run as fast as he could.

He did not know where he was and did not dare to stop running until he was sure that he was out of their reach. He then stopped to think about how he would get home. After thinking awhile, he made his way to the main road, where he tried to stop a taxi. However, because it was so late, the taxi did not stop.

As the taxi sped by, Faraaz started to make du’aa to Allaah. When another taxi drove up to him, he took the name of Allaah before calling for it. This taxi stopped and Faraaz gave him his house address. Faraaz made du’aa all the time until the taxi he reached home.

Faraaz was surprised to see police vehicles outside his house. As he ran inside, his father was the first person he saw. His father stared at him in shock and he stared at his father, until he leapt forward and hugged his father, saying, “Please forgive me Dad! I shall never make friends with bad boys again.”

His father consoled him and they both sat on the sofa. Faraaz then explained to the police officers what had happened with him, Nadeem and Kaashif. The police acted swiftly and were able to arrest all the criminals involved that very night.

After the incident, Faraaz made a firm intention to obey his parents even more than he did before, to devote himself to his studies, to avoid bad company and to save others from getting into the wrong company.

This was the return of Faraaz to the path of goodness and success that he had strayed from. He now tread this path with a better resolve and commitment.

Dear friends! We must all resolve to always obey our parents, to devote ourselves to our studies, to avoid bad company and to save others from getting into the wrong company. We should tread the path of goodness and also do our best to get others to tread the same path.

Priceless Treasures

Question 1: What was the last action Rasulullaah ρ before he passed away?

Answer 1: ....

Question 2: On what form of conveyance did Rasulullaah ρ deliver the sermon during the Hajjatul Widaa and what was it's name?

Answer 2: ....

Question 3: How many times does Rasulullaah ρ's name appear in the Qur'aan?

Answer 3: ....

Riddles

1.

A single ocean with thirty islands and pearls and gems scattered within
Whoever travels this ocean will get the pearls and gems for free.
What is this ocean?

2.

No eating when you have it
Should you then eat, you will no longer have it.
What is it?

Please do Not Laugh

❁ A very fat man was standing by the roadside when a porter passed by.

“Please take me to the station,” the fat man asked.

The porter looked carefully at the fat man and said, “I can take you to the station, but I will have to make two trips.”

❁ A fool: Someone stole my buffalo last night.
Another fool: What a pity

A fool: However, he will get nothing out of her
Another fool: Why is that?

A fool: Because I milked every drop from her yesterday evening.

The Little Nightingale

Aamir breathed heavily as he climbed up the tree. He placed each foot upon a sturdy branch as he climbed, not at all caring for the ants that scuffled along his leg and biting him several times.

He kept his focus on the nest that was higher above. The nest was built by a nightingale and was currently occupied by the busy little bird and her little fledgling. When he reached the nest, the nightingale started to flutter and make as much noise as it could to ward Aamir away.

However, Aamir was not scared for her and quickly picked up the little nightingale from the nest. He then started to climb down the tree, taking care not to let go of the little nightingale in his hand. Despite all the fluttering and noise of the mother nightingale, Aamir managed to get down safely and went straight home.

The mother nightingale did her best to flutter around his head as he walked home, but could do nothing when he went inside and shut the door.

Aamir went straight up to steel wire cage and placed the little nightingale inside. Until yesterday, he had a baby sparrow inside the cage, which had died because he had not given it any food or water. It was that very morning that he threw the dead body out of his window and made plans to replace it with the baby nightingale.

Aamir was a boy who enjoyed capturing little birds and keeping them in captivity. He would regularly scout around the trees and woods nearby to search for nests and even break the eggs he found in nests. Despite all the scolding and lecturing he received from his parents and grandmother, Aamir would not stop this terrible pastime.

Today after locking the baby nightingale in the cage, Aamir lay on his bed and went off to sleep. As he drifted into the world of dreams, he heard himself shout, “Where am I? What is this place?”

Aamir was all alone in front a large mountain range. He started to walk in the direction ahead to find a road out of the blazing sun. There were

sharp rocks protruding from the path as he walked down the slopes, so the walk took him very long. It seems like the walk was endless and his throat and mouth started to dry up so much that he was almost choking. He walked on and on, but could find no water to drink or any way out of the place. He then looked up to where he had started to walk to see how far he had come. It was then that he got a terrible shock when he realised he had walked only a few steps.

“Oh Allaah!” he thought, “How could it be possible? Where on earth am I?”

It then appeared that a rock moved in front of him. Aamir jumped upright and looked closely. The rock was moving indeed. As it shifted further, he saw a few legs protruding from the ground and then an entire body emerged. It was a scorpion. Aamir did not need to be told to run and he did so as fast as he could. As he ran with the scorpion behind him, Aamir noticed a cloud in the air. However, with the scorpion hot on his heels, he could not sit in its shade and continued to run as fast as he could. Eventually, he managed to outrun the scorpion and it disappeared in another direction.

Trying hard to get his breath back, Aamir sat in the shade of the cloud and felt immensely relieved. However, his relief was not long-lived because when he saw the cloud draw closer, he realised that it was not a cloud after all, but a flight of large birds. They were now coming straight at him with their beaks first to attack.

As one of them grabbed his leg and lifted him into the air. Aamir was overcome with intense fear and started to scream in pain and suffering. He realised immediately that this must be his punishment for all the harm and suffering he caused to the birds in the past.

“Oh Allaah!” he gasped, “Please protect me and I promise never to harm any bird ever again.”

As the bird soared higher into the sky with Aamir in its beak, it suddenly let go and Aamir fell tumbling through the air. As he fell, he realised that he was heading straight for the razor sharp rocks jutting out of the ground. He also noticed the scorpion running towards the place where he was going to land.

The ground drew closer very quickly and it was just before he landed on the rocks that he gave a piercing shriek.

"Aamir! Aamir! What happened?" his grandmother called.

Aamir's eyes opened at that moment and he saw his grandmother standing beside him. Aamir was covered in perspiration. He immediately jumped up and hugged his grandmother, saying, "I shall never harm any creature ever again."

His grandmother gently stroked his back and understood that he must have seen a frightening dream. "Here," she said lovingly, "Have some water to drink."

She then poured out some water from the jug into a glass and Aamir drank it gratefully. When he was done, she put him on her lap. Knowing that he really was regretting the harm he had caused to little birds and animals in the past, she said to him, "It is a serious sin to cause harm to birds and animals because they are also living creatures and need to be treated with kindness. Rasulullaah ρ was once travelling with the Sahabah ψ when some of them captured two little sparrows. The mother sparrow then went to Rasulullaah ρ and, with her wings fluttering, she complained about this to Rasulullaah ρ. Rasulullaah ρ always treated animals with great compassion and immediately asked the Sahabah ψ, 'Who has troubled this sparrow by capturing her babies?' The Sahabah ψ who did it then returned the babies to their mother."

Aamir was listening attentively. His grandmother continued, "Aamir dear! We are all Muslims and follow the way that Rasulullaah ρ showed us. We must therefore also treat birds and animals with love and kindness."

When she said this, Aamir's eyes immediately fell on the window, where he saw the mother nightingale staring at him, as if to say, "Please release my child! Please release my child!"

"Excuse me for a minute," Aamir said as he jumped off her lap and hurried to the cage. He opened the door of the cage and took the baby nightingale out. Holding the baby gently, he went outside and walked

to the tree where he had found the little nightingale. He then climbed the tree and tenderly put the baby back in the nest.

The mother nightingale had followed him to the nest and watched from a nearby branch as he replaced the baby. As soon as her baby was safe in the nest, the mother immediately flew down to be with the little one and hold it with love. It was for the first time that Aamir experienced the joy of making little creatures happy. It was with this thought in mind that he got down the tree and returned home.

“Where have you been, dear?” his grandmother asked.

“I just returned that baby nightingale to its nest,” he replied.

“Congratulations!” his grandmother exclaimed as she hugged him and held him close. She was proud of him.

Dear friends! Have you ever ill-treated any birds or animals? If you ever did, you will repent to Allaah for it and you will certainly not do so in future. You will now do your best to treat them well and guard them against any harm. Won’t you?

The People of the Elephant

“No one from Yemen should ever go to Makkah to perform Hajj. They must do all their worship at my church here.”

Do you know who spoke these words? Well, we shall tell you.

These words were spoken a very long time ago by the governor of Yemen who had built such a magnificent church in Yemen that none had ever seen before. He built this because he was jealous of the Kabah in Makkah. However, instead of coming to his church, the Arabs still preferred to travel to Makkah to make Tawaaf of the Kabah. This made him very angry and he eventually forbade the people from going to Makkah.

The name of this governor was Abraha.

However, despite his warnings to the people, the Arabs did not want to listen and still did not come to his church. In fact, one of them even messed his church one night, which made Abraha even more furious. This time he took an oath that he would march to Makkah and destroy the Kabah.

Dear children! You know well by now that the Kabah was built by Hadhrat Ibraheem υ and that all Muslims face the Kabah when they perform salaah.

Abraha prepared a very large army and took along many elephants as well. The largest of these elephants was one by the name of Mahmood. He planned to tie chains to the pillars of the Kabah and have the elephants then pull them down.

As his army marched from Yemen, several Arab tribes tried to stop him. The first to fight him was a man called Dhu Nafar and his band of tribes. However, Allaah had decided that Abraha be humiliated in front of the world and this attack was unsuccessful. Abraha defeated the band and captured Dhu Nafar. The second leader to fight him was a man called Nufayl bin Habeeb, but his army was also defeated and Nufayl was taken prisoner.

When Abraha's army eventually drew close to Makkah, the camped at a place called Mughammas, where the people of Makkah grazed their camels. Abraha took possession of all the camels, amongst which 200 belonged to Rasulullaah ρ's grandfather Abdul Muttalib.

It was only a matter of time now for Abraha to march into Makkah and attempt to do what he planned. The Arabs could not match his powerful army.

Abraha sent a messenger into Makkah to inform the leaders of the Quraysh that he did not intend to fight them, but only wanted to destroy the Kabah. However, he warned them not to try to oppose him, otherwise he would have to deal with them.

Abdul Muttalib replied by saying, "We also have no intention or the strength to fight him. What I need to tell him is that this is the House of Allaah, which His friend Ibraheem υ built. Allaah will therefore protect it. Warn him that if he stills wants to fight against Allaah, he may proceed and then meet the consequences."

When the messenger heard this response from Abdul Muttalib, he requested him to personally see Abraha. Abdul Muttalib went along with him. Abarah was immediately impressed when he saw Abdul Muttalib and get off his throne to sit down with him.

Thinking that Abdul Muttalib had come to plead with him not to attack the Kabah, Abraha asked. "Why have you come?"

Abdul Muttalib replied, "I have come to request that you return to me my camels that your men have seized."

To this, Abraha exclaimed, "When I saw you, I was very impressed with you, but now that I have spoken to you, I am not impressed any more. You know that I have come to destroy you Kabah, but all you can do is speak to me about your 200 camels?"

Abdul Muttalib calmly replied, "I have to see to the safety of the camels because they are mine. The Kabah is the property of the Greatest and He will see to its safety."

If Abraha had any sense, he would have returned immediately. However, he was far too proud and arrogant because of his large army and he scoffed, "Even your god cannot save it from me!"

Abraha then returned the camels to Abdul Muttalib, who then went back to the Kabah. Holding the ring of the door, he started to make du'aa to Allaah and was joined by many other people. They pleaded to Allaah to safeguard the Kabah because they did not have the strength to oppose Abraha. All the people of Makkah then took their belongings and headed for the mountains.

The following morning, Abraha prepared the army to march into Makkah. Before he left, the captured Nufayl bin Habeeb whispered in the ear of the giant elephant Mahmood, saying, "You had better go back because you are about to enter Allaah's City of Safety."

Mahmood then sat down and refused to move. The elephant keepers tried everything to get him to move, but he would not. They hit him with their weapons and even placed steel rods in his trunk, but Mahmood did not move forward. When they turned him towards Yemen, he moved willingly, but as soon as they turned him towards Makkah, he sat down.

While they were trying to move him, they saw several flights of little birds flying towards them from the seaside. Each one of these birds held a pebble in its beak and a pebble each in every claw. The likes of these birds were never seen before. They were slightly smaller than pigeons and their claws were red in colour.

The birds flew over Abraha's army and rained the pebbles down on them. The pebbles penetrated right through everybody they struck and then buried themselves in the ground. All the elephants ran away as soon as the attack started, with the exception of one, which was then killed together with most of the army. Some of the soldiers who managed to escape then died on the road back to Yemen.

Because Abraha deserved to be punished, he was not killed instantly by the pebbles, but his body became so infected by disease after the attack that his limbs started to rot and fall off. By the time he reached Yemen his body was in pieces and he eventually died a painful death.

Allaah has discussed this story in Surah Feel in the 30th Para of the Qur'aan. Allaah says, "**Have you not seen how your Rabb dealt with the people of the elephants? Did He not lay their plans to waste and send against them flights of birds, who pelted them with clay pebbles making them look** *(destroyed)* **like eaten fodder?"**

Dear friends! This story tells us how powerful Allaah is and that all the power in this world can do nothing against the might of Allaah. We must therefore fear Allaah alone and fulfil all His commands.

The story also tells us that Allaah will protect His Deen by Himself and does not need the help of the creation. Allaah has the power to use even weak and small creatures to destroy powerful enemies. Any person who is foolish enough to challenge the power of Allaah is heading for his own destruction.

Intelligence and success therefore lies in following the commands of Allaah, encouraging others to do the same and in making an effort to assist the propagation of Deen.

Question 4: Which Sahabi τ was the first to build a Masjid?

Answer 4: ....

Question 5: Which Sahabi τ is mentioned by name in the Qur'aan?

Answer 5: ....

Question 6: Which Sahabi τ led the salaah during the lifetime of Rasulullaah ρ and Rasulullaah ρ followed him in salaah?

Answer 6: ....

Riddles

3.

All tied together in a ring
Shoulder to shoulder
They move back and forth
Each one getting a turn to be counted
What is it?

4.

Never let go of its hand
Better still, take it with both hands
It goes silently to the heavens
And returns to earth with glorious gifts.
What is it?

Please do Not Laugh

❁ A traveller asked a local, “Where is this road going to?”
“Which one?” the local asked.
When the traveller pointed to the road, the local replied, “That road is not going anywhere. I see it there every day.”

❁ First man: My car runs on petrol.
Second man: My car runs on diesel.
Third man: My car runs on beating.

“What do you mean?” the first and second asked.

“I have a donkey cart,” he replied.

The Secret of the Haunted House

“I’m telling you that there is a ghost in that house!”

I had repeated these words for the third time when Arsalaan finally shook his bald head and said, “How could it be? How would you know that?”

He kept shaking his head as if it was an algebra problem that he could not understand. Not that he understood much of algebra, but it was worse still when he thought he understood, but he really understood the opposite of what was meant.

Farooq and Umar were also disbelieving. The three were my cousins. Arsalaan and Umar were sons of my eldest uncle and Farooq was the son of my youngest uncle. Arsalaan was much brighter than the other two and always shaved his head because he believed that hair grew from the brain. He was therefore of the opinion that the more hair a person had meant that he had that much less brains.

The four of us were very close and always had our meals as well as or hiding together. The hiding was because we were always accomplishing tasks that forced our elders to give us a hiding.

Just recently the neighbour had a nephew come over for a holiday who told everyone that he was from Canada. We knew that he could not be from Canada, so we decided to prove it. We invested plenty of money and time to research books and maps on Canada, learning about its cities, borders, fresh produce, people, etc. We then confronted him and ask him questions about Canada. Needless to say, he could not answer the questions and we quickly made it known that he was not Canadian, but from Timbuktu.

We were so happy with ourselves until that evening when the neighbour came over and complained to our grandfather. I cannot even speak about the hiding we got that night.

Anyway, we now had a different mission. There was a house at the end of the street that people believed was haunted. Strange noises were

heard coming from the house and mothers in the area warned their children not to go near it. In fact, our grandfather made it clear that if we just looked at it, he would turn us all into ghosts. We knew well what that meant, so we heeded the warning for a long time.

However, during these June and July holidays we decided that the fear should come to an end and that we were going to expose the secret of the haunted house. To do this, we needed to keep a watch on the house from the best spot, which happened to be one of the rooms in our house. Unfortunately for us, the room belonged to someone whom we feared even more than the ghost. The room belonged to my elder brother and there was no way he would allow us in the room to watch from there. We needed to get his room key. But, how?

“You will get it for us, Arsalaan,” Farooq said.

“M…m…me!” Arsalaan shouted, “Why don’t you get it?”

“Now calm down,” I said, “Look, Arsalaan. Imagine how you would be the hero when the mission is complete. People will make you stand on a stage and place a garland. Imagine that!”

Arsalaan stared at the ceiling as I said this and I had to wave my hand in front of his face to get his attention again. “We will have to think up an excuse for you to get in,” I said.

“Yes, a plan,” Farooq said as he thought about it, “We can tell brother that you will be cleaning his room for him.”

“Excellent idea!” Umar shouted.

“Will that be alright, Arsalaan?” Farooq asked.

“Explain to me the complete plan,” Arsalaan asked.

“Here’s what you will do,” Farooq explained, “You will go to him early in the morning and tell him that you have come to clean his room for him. He will obviously agree and you will clean slowly so that you are not yet done when he has to leave. He will then leave the door unlocked and the key in the lock. Hah, how’s that?”

“Heh, heh!” Arsalaan copied.

We all then went soundly to bed and dreamt of catching ghosts the following day. Beware ghosts!

We woke up early the following morning and prepared our equipment. We had a pair of binoculars and a toy gun, which looked real. As I started to clean the binoculars, Umar asked, “Where is that Arsalaan?”

“Yes, where is he?” Farooq said as he looked about.

“Check in the bathroom,” I said to them.

“I have just come from the bathroom,” Umar said, “And the door is still locked from the inside. He must still be in the room then.”

We then searched the room, until Umar found him fast asleep under the sofa. Umar took a stick and started to hit him to wake up, but he would not budge. “Be careful!” I warned Umar, “We still need him to do our work for us.”

When we finally managed to get him to stand up, Arsalaan refused to go. It was only when Umar promised to help him with his schoolwork that Arsalaan decided to go ahead. Umar made him a cup of tea with the electric kettle we had in the room and we all sent him off.

Rubbing his bald head all the while, he walked ever so slowly up the stairs to brother’s room. When he eventually reached the door, he knocked on it.

“Come in!” brother shouted from inside.

Arsalaan was so shocked when he heard brother’s voice that he forgot what he had come for. It was a strange sight to see. There was brother calling him in and Arsalaan standing speechless without going inside. Eventually, brother opened the door himself and was surprised to see Arsalaan up so early in the morning.

“What’s the matter?” he asked.

“I…I..I came to…” Arsalaan muttered.

Brother looked sternly at Arsalaan, before slamming the door shut and going back inside. It was only when he shut the door that Arsalaan remembered that he had come to clean the room and then get the key.

He was still thinking this when brother opened the door again and asked, “Did you now remember why you came?”

“Oh yes I did,” Arsalaan replied, “I have come to…to…” He started to stutter in panic.

“Come to what?” brother hurried him.

“I have come to clean your room,” Arsalaan replied.

When he looked at him with suspicion, Arsalaan said, “I really have come to clean up your room.”

“You?” brother exclaimed in surprise, “You cleaning?” He looked carefully at Arsalaan who was wearing the same clothing for the past week and a half and who usually never bothered to be clean.

We had forgotten to get Arsalaan to change before sending him, but it was too late now. In fact, because he had been sleeping under the sofa, there were spider webs on his clothing as well.

“Don’t you worry,” Arsalaan assured him, “I shall clean the mess on your writing table, clean the dust off your window, clean the doors and so many other things that need attention.”

Although he found it very hard to believe, brother agreed and said, “Alright, you may go ahead. But you need to first wash yourself before starting.”

As soon as we heard brother starting his motorbike as he left for the office, we sprang up from where we were and raced upstairs. “Bring the binoculars quickly,” Umar shouted as he placed a chair near the window from where we could see the haunted house.

“Put the mission on hold for a while,” I said to them, “Let us first clean up the room so that brother does not find his room untidy when he returns.”

“That’s right,” Farooq said in support.

We then worked together to clean the room. Although we have many capabilities, there are some that are seldom ever seen, such as this amazing ability to clean up. It was fortunate that grandfather did not see what we were doing, otherwise he would have certainly become suspicious and foiled out plans.

As we all gathered around the window that looked directly at the haunted house, I took up the binoculars and started to look carefully at the house. I needed to have the first look to decide what we would be doing, but I knew I had to be quick because the others would not allow me to look for too long.

As I expected, I had hardly looked for long when Arsalaan started to nag. “Pass the binoculars to me. What are looking at for so long?” he muttered.

“Here, you can have a look at the ghost, but just don’t wet your pants,” I said in anger as I handed the binoculars to him.

“What are we to do, Ali?” Farooq asked me.

“We all need to go there tonight,” I said.

I was still explaining the plan when we heard a loud crash behind us. Umar had fallen off the chair and was looking around the room as if to see what had happened. I ground my teeth as I stared at him. Grandfather’s room was directly below and the noise was sure to attract his attention.

“What is the matter with you?” Farooq exclaimed.

“How am I to know,” Umar replied, “Maybe I fell asleep.”

“Well, you would certainly know when grandfather comes up to spank you,” Arsalaan shouted.

This made Umar furious and he retorted, “You were so intent on staring at the ghost, why should you bother if I fall asleep?”

Arsalaan was about to reply to him, when I interrupted them, saying, “Grandfather has not come as yet. This means that he had not heard or is not bothered because the noise is from brother’s room and not ours. Had it been from our room, he would have already been here by now. Let us now continue with our plan.”

When I had all of their attention, I continued, “Look friends! We are a very capable group of boys. All we have to do is display just how capable we are because whenever we try to do so, our elders keep stopping us. Friends! The time has now come!”

I was speaking like an orator now and the others were listening attentively and even shouting to encourage me further.

I therefore closed my eyes and continued, “The time has come for us to show the world who we are! I am me. Arsalaan is Arsalaan….”

I was engrossed in what I was saying that I did not notice the door open. I was imagining myself on a stage, addressing a large audience and enjoying their attention. As I was speaking with my eyes shut tight, I felt something wooden on my throat, but did not give it much thought. As the feeling grew worse, I thought that it must be Umar doing something because he was jealous of my outstanding speech. With my eyes still closed, I grabbed at the stick and shoved it aside, saying, “Get off me!”

It was then that I felt as if the earth and sky were collapsing around me. I fell to the floor and my eyes immediately opened. There I saw Grandfather standing over me. I closed my eyes again, thinking that I must be imagining it because I had not seen him enter the room. However, when I slowly opened my eyes again, Grandfather was still there.

I quickly stood up and joined the other three, who were lined up against the wall. I was furious with them for not warning me about Grandfather. However, I was also hoping that they do not inform Grandfather about what we were intending to do.

“The binoculars!” the thought suddenly flashed through my mind, Arsalaan was the last to have it with him, so I looked at him. He was standing empty handed, so he must have hid it somewhere.

Grandfather then calmly sat on the sofa and asked, “Alright. Now maybe you lot can explain to me what you are doing here in this room.”

“You see, Grandfather …” Farooq said.

“You see, Grandfather …” Umar said.

I also tried to say something, but Grandfather held up his stick to indicate that we should all be quiet. We then remained silent as Grandfather said, “Arsalaan! Tell me what was going on.”

“Well, Grandfather,” he spoke innocently; We were really cleaning brother’s room for him.”

“Cleaning the room?!” Grandfather shouted in surprise.

“That is exactly what we were doing,” Arsalaan assured him, “The fact is that we are all forced to bath, forced to change our clothing, whereas we would like to do these things ourselves. That is why we are doing it now because we would like to.”

What he said about us cleaning the room was true, although it was not the complete truth. However, no one was going to tell Grandfather about the plan to visit the haunted house.

Grandfather then looked at me and said, “What is it time for?”

I was confused at first, but I then realised that Grandfather was referring to my speech. “Oh!” I said, “I…I…I was going to say that it is time for us to eat. Yes it is time to eat.”

“Yes,” Umar echoed, “It is time to eat.”

“It was already past twelve, so I was telling everyone that we needed to go to eat,” I said as I gulped hard.

Grandfather smiled a smile that I had grown to fear because it meant that something was wrong. He then said, “Time for eating or for a hiding?”

“Eating, of course,” I said as I stepped backwards and kept my eyes fixed on his stick.

“Listen all to you!” Grandfather announced.

“Yes, Grandfather,” we all replied in one voice.

He smiled again and said, “Go and eat. Your favourite meal has been prepared today.”

Without a second bidding, we all hastened off to the kitchen.

That night at nine, Grandfather peeked into our room to see if we were asleep. We all lay as still as we could possibly be and he soon left without a word. As soon as it was ten, we all threw off our blankets and got off out beds. We then put our heads together to discuss.

“What is the plan?” Arsalaan whispered to me. Farooq and Umar were listening intently.

“There is nothing like ghosts,” I said, “We will all go into that house tonight and recite Aayatul Kursi so that we are protected.”

“But if there is no ghost there, what is there?” Umar asked.

“I think that something illegal is taking place there,” I explained quietly, “There is a back door leading to the gully, which I think the criminals are using to go in and out. We will have to investigate this tonight.”

“You will all see how brave I am tonight!” Arsalaan shouted.

Hitting Arsalaan on the head, Farooq said, “Speak softly!”

“Why did you have to hit me?” Arsalaan responded in anger.

I had to place my hand on his mouth to keep him silent and then said, "Come on. Are we all ready?"

We were ready. We had our toy pistol as well as my father's old mobile phone, which had the number of our good friend Uncle Aasif, who was with the police. We also carried our Kaajal[1]. We used the Kaajal to disguise ourselves. Farooq had also used it on Arsalaan's head so that it was not visible in the darkness.

We left the house from the back door, recited Aayatul Kursi and blew over each other. When we got to the house, I placed my ear against the door, but could hear nothing. I then signalled to the others and bent beneath an open window. Farooq placed his foot on me and jumped inside, followed by Arsalaan. I then got in and we helped pull Umar through because he was too weak to get in by himself.

We had entered the gallery of the house, which then led to two doors into the house. However, both these doors were locked and the windows to the rooms were covered with wooden planks. We had to make a plan to get in. We therefore sat down with our heads locked together. After while, we started to look around carefully. It was then that I noticed a pipe that had been installed recently and attached to the wall with clips.

"Look there!" I said to the others, pointing at the pipe, "There is a pipe, which we can use to climb to the rooms upstairs."

"If we needed to climb a roof, we could well have climbed our own roof," Umar objected.

"Don't be foolish!" I scolded, "People usually don't lock upstairs doors, so we will be able to get into the house from them once we get onto the upstairs windows."

Now that they all understood the plan, they shook their heads and agreed to proceed. We climbed up the pipe and then through an upstairs window. It was ten minutes later that we found ourselves looking down the spiral staircase leading downstairs. I then warned the others, saying, "We have not come to fight with anyone. We will only see what is happening here and then leave."

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[1] A type of Kohl, used as eyeliner.

"You mean to see what the ghosts are up to," Arsalaan said. While I would normally scold him for trying to correct me in this manner, this was no occasion for scolding anyone. I therefore ignored it and we walked down the stairs.

When we came down the staircase, we found a passage leading to two doors on either side. I went to the door on the right and motioned to Farooq to listen what was happening behind the door on the left.

There was a deep silence from the door I had placed my ear against, while Farooq indicated to me that he could hear the spinning sound of a fan. That meant that there was someone inside.

I then put my hand on the handle of the room in front of me, which I guessed was empty. To my surprise, the door was unlocked and it opened. I peeked inside slowly and saw many boxes stacked there. I motioned to the others to follow me and we all went inside.

We had barely closed the door behind us when we heard someone coming down the stairs. As well all looked for a place to hide, I saw a corner of the room where there was hiding space behind some boxes. I quickly called to the others and they followed me into hiding.

Just then we heard someone stop outside the door, open it and say to someone else, "I am exhausted now." We then heard a box being put down and someone say, "Be careful! Put it down slowly because there are valuable goods inside."

"OK, OK," the other person said, "The job is done."

"That is the last box," the man said, "We now have until the following day to distribute these throughout the country."

They then left the room, closed the door and we heard the sound of keys turning. We waited a while after they had left before coming out of hiding. Umar was the first to check the door. "They've locked it from the outside," he said.

"What will we do now?" Arsalaan asked.

“Why would they lock the door?” Farooq asked.

“This seems to be their storeroom,” I said, “The door was open at first because they were bringing their goods in. Now that they have finished, they locked it. Well, at least we know that there are no ghosts here, only people.”

“But what is in these boxes?” Arsalaan said as he placed his hand on one of them.

“Let us open them and find out,” I said. We then opened one of the boxes and stepped back when we saw what was inside. It was a large and dangerous looking gun.

“Let us open another one,” I suggested.

When we opened another box, we found it full of smaller guns. We now understood what the men meant when they said that they were going to distribute these throughout the country. They were terrorists who were intent on causing some strike on the people of the country.

We then huddled together and I whispered, “Allaah has blessed us to have discovered these weapons before they can be used. We will now have to contact Uncle Aasif in the police and inform him about this. However, we also need to make sure that the men do not get back here and use these weapons against the police when they come. We must therefore empty these boxes and shift them against the door so that these men will be unable to get in even if they break the door?”

Taking out the mobile, I warned, “Please do the shifting very quietly while I call Uncle Aasif.” I then dialled the number and spoke to Uncle Aasif. It took a while before I managed to convince Uncle Aasif about the weapons we discovered. The news made him worried and promised to get there with the police as soon as possible.

We waited another fifteen minutes before the police arrived, but we were confident that no one would be able to get through the door we had barricaded. When we heard noises outside and plenty of shuffling and running about, we knew that they had come. It was then that we heard someone inside the house shouting, “Get the guns out!”

Someone came to the door and started to turn the handle. However, we had secured the door from the inside and they were unable to get in.

“The door is locked from the inside!” I heard someone shout.

By this time, there was plenty of firing outside as the police exchanged fire with the terrorists. We sat in the room in utter fear, not daring to move.

Our fears were doubled when suddenly someone screamed, “Shoot the door down!”

“Are you insane!” another man shouted, “There are enough explosives in there to reduce this house to dust.”

“Then let us break it down!” I heard them say.

We then heard them banging at the door with all their might. I then had a quick word with Farooq, who shouted in a deep voice saying, “Beware! We will fire at anyone who dares break down the door.”

The sound of the door banging stopped immediately. Although we could not fire a single round of a real gun, the warning was enough to stop the men.

The firing continued for about half an hour, before it started to quiet down. About an hour then passed before there was absolute silence. We could not wait for the police to arrive inside the house so that we could return home. We needed to get this over with before starting our next adventure of taking the hiding that Grandfather was sure to give us.

We then heard the sound of heavy boots on the floorboards and someone shouting, “Police! Open up!”

Arsalaan jumped up to move the boxes, but I stopped him and shouted, “Please call Inspector Aasif first. We will open the door only when he tells us to open.”

Arsalaan shook his head when he understood that I was doing this in case it was a ploy of the terrorists. It was not long afterwards that we heard Uncle Aasif calling out, “Ali! Farooq!”

Farooq then pointed to the mobile to indicate to me that I can verify Uncle Aasif’s location if I called him. I therefore dialled his number and heard him say, “Hello Ali! I am standing at the door right now. You may call for me and I shall call back.”

I then ended the call and shouted, “Uncle Aasif!”

“I am here!” I heard him reply from outside, “Please open the door.”

We all then hastily moved the heavy boxes from the doorway. As soon as the door opened, we saw Uncle Aasif standing there. “What have you lot been up to?” he asked.

“Well,” I started to explain, “We were really on a ghost hunting mission and …”

I was still explaining when he said, “Yes! I know what you were doing. You boys have accomplished a great mission tonight.”

All the police officers there looked at us with pride as we walked through the passage. Arsalaan walked with his shoulders raised as if he had accomplished everything himself.

“There are still some formalities to complete,” Uncle Aasif explained as he walked with us, “Wait for me here in the van. I will be back soon.”

As we stood outside, we were suddenly over come with shock when we saw someone more frightening than the terrorists. Although we were disguised and the night was dark, Grandfather recognised us and was walking over to us with his stick in hand.

Looking at us sternly, he said, “As soon as Aasif is done with you, you will all come straight home.” Saying this, he turned sharply and left.

We then walked on and waited in the police van. Farooq said, “We had better go and wash up before everyone thinks that we are the ghosts.”

This made us feel better and we laughed as we went to the bathroom and washed ourselves.

When everything was done and Uncle Aasif brought us home, we walked in expecting the worst hiding ever. However, there was nothing to be afraid of. Mom and Dad hugged us as soon as we entered and praised us.

We then went up to Grandfather, expecting the worse, when he also hugged us and said, “My dear children. I am so proud of you.”

Question 7: Which Muslim general conquered Egypt?

Answer 7: ....

Question 8: During the reign of which Muslim ruler did the first Muslim navy set sail?

Answer 8: ....

Question 9: What was the actual name of Sultan Tipu رحمه الله and what is the meaning of Tipu?

Answer 9: ....

...

Riddles

5.

A small leader arrived and the children all shouted
It then led a trail across the pages
Do tell us what it is.

6.

It has no life but is faster than the living ones
It is not a bird but faster than them too.
What is it?

Please do Not Laugh

❁ Man from the city: What grows on this farm?
Farmer: Cotton plants from which cloth is made.
Man from city: Excellent! Now do tell me when I can expect shirt and trousers to grow?

❁ First child: Where does this road go to?
Second child: To the hospital.
First child: Why? Is it ill?

The Reward for Gratitude

“Alhamdu Lillaah!” Grandfather said after he drank the water.

Remembering that he was also thirsty, the little boy also ran up to his grandfather and said, “Me too! Me too!”

Grandfather smiled at him, poured out some water in a glass and gave it to him. When he was done, he said, “Now tell me what to read.” He then stuttered the words, “Al … ham…du…”

“Al Ham Du Lil Laah,” Grandfather said slowly for the boy to repeat.

The little boy’s name was Waasif. He was an excellent boy who had a great interest in learning. Even when he was not thirsty, he would run up to his father or grandfather and ask for water to drink so that he could learn the du’aa.

As he grew older and attended school and Madrasah, he learned to recite the Qur'aan and assist in the household chores. He did all these very well and still remembered to recite the du’aa after drinking water.

He was busy doing homework one day when he felt thirsty. He was about to get up to fetch some water when he saw his grandfather drinking some. He therefore repeated what he used to say a little boy, “Me too! Me too!”

His grandfather laughed at this and then poured some water for him. After drinking the water, Waseel said loudly “Alhamdu Lillaah!”

His grandfather smiled and said, “Do you know why we say Alhamdu Lillaah?”

“No. Why do we?” Waseel replied.

“Well,” his grandfather said, “We say this in order to thank Allaah for the water He has given us to drink. Imagine if you were dying of thirst. How precious would this water not be to you?”

"There would be nothing else I could think of at that time, but water," Waseel replied.

"We therefore say these words to thank Allaah for this great bounty of water," his grandfather repeated.

"We then need to thank Allaah for every bounty He gives us," Waseel added.

"That is right," his grandfather confirmed, "Let me tell you a story about being grateful."

"Please do, grandfather," Waseel said as he sat upright, "I shall listen with both ears."

"Well," his grandfather started, "This is a story that Rasulullaah ρ related to the Sahabah ψ. The story tells us about three men. One was bald, the other was a leper, whose body gave off a terrible odour because of the disease, and the third was a blind man. All three of them continuously made du'aa to Allaah to cure them of their problems, promising to be grateful to Him thereafter."

Allaah therefore sent an angel to each one of them in the form of a human. The angel first went to the leper and asked him, "What would you like best?"

He replied, "I would like a nice complexion, a beautiful skin, and that this sickness goes away from me whereby people do not allow me to sit with them and which they hate."

The angel passed his hand over the body of that person. He was immediately cured and a nice skin and beautiful complexion appeared. The angel then asked him, "What type of wealth do you like the most?"

He replied, "Camels." So he gave him a pregnant camel and told him, "May Allaah give you barakah in this."

The angel then went to the bald person and asked him, "What would you like best?"

He replied, "That my hair grows nicely and that this condition which people dislike goes away from me!"

The angel passed his hand over his head, he was immediately cured and beautiful hair began to grow.

He then asked him, "What type of wealth do you like the most?"

He replied, "Cows." So he gave him a pregnant cow and told him, "May Allaah give you barakah in this."

Eventually, the angel went to the blind person and asked him, "What would you like most?"

He replied, "That Allaah gives me back my sight so that I may be able to see everyone."

The angel passed his hand over his eyes and Allaah gave him back his sight. He then asked him, "What type of wealth do you like the most?"

He replied, "Goats." So he was given a pregnant goat. The animals of all three delivered their babies. In a short time, they had plenty of camels, cows and goats.

Thereafter, Allaah put them through the test. The angel assumed his human form and went to the leper and said to him, "I am a poor leper. All my provisions for my journey are finished. Today I have no means of reaching home except through Allaah and then through your help. In the name of that Allaah who has blessed you with a nice skin and a beautiful complexion, I ask you for a camel which I could ride and reach my home."

However, the man replied, "Get far away from here, you ugly looking man! I have a lot of other commitments to fulfil. I do not have anything give you without a price."

The angel said, "I think I recognise you. Were you not a leper, for which people despised you? Were you not very poor, and then Allaah blessed you with so much of wealth?"

He replied, "No! No! Not at all! I inherited this wealth from my father."

The angel said, "If you are lying, may Allaah return you as you were before."

It then happened that he was returned to his original state. He now wept and regretted, but it was too late. He had failed the test.

The angel then went to the bald person in his previous form and said to him, "I am a poor man. All my provisions for my journey are finished. Today I have no means of reaching home except through Allaah and then through your help. In the name of that Allaah who has blessed you with a nice crop of hair, I ask you for a camel which I could ride and reach my home."

However, the man replied, "Get far away from here, you bald and smelly man! I have a lot of other commitments to fulfil. I do not have anything give you without a price."

The angel said, "I think I recognise you. Were you not a bald man, for which people despised you? Were you not very poor, and then Allaah blessed you with so much of wealth?"

He replied, "No! No! Not at all! I inherited this wealth from my father."

The angel said, "If you are lying, may Allaah return you as you were before."

It then happened that he was returned to his original state. He now wept and regretted, but it was too late. He too had failed the test.

Allaah wished to see which of these men would show appreciation for what he had been given and then spend from that in Sadaqah. Had they done this, Allaah would have granted them even more barakah.

"Now what about the third man?" Waasif asked in eagerness.

His grandfather continued, "Eventually he went to the blind person in that same original form and said to him, "I am a traveller and all my provisions are finished. Today I have no means except Allaah and then you. In the name of that Being who returned to you your eye-sight, I

ask you for a goat with which I could do my work and complete my journey."

The man who had been blind replied, "Without doubt, I was blind. It was only out of His mercy that Allaah gave me back my eye-sight. Take as much as you want and leave behind as much as you want. By Allaah, I will not stop you from taking anything."

The angel replied, "Keep your wealth with you, I do not want anything. I had only come to test you three. Now the test is over. Allaah is pleased with you and displeased with the other two."

"You see the benefit of being grateful, Waasif!" his grandfather said, "It really makes Allaah very happy."

To this Waasif said, "Wow, grandfather! Now I shall be even more grateful for everything Allaah has granted me and show my appreciation. I shall also tell all my friends to do the same."

Dear friends! We must all show gratitude for Allaah's bounties and encourage others to do the same.

Whenever you receive a bounty from Allaah, say 'Alhamdu Lillaah' and ensure that you do to waste it. In this way, Allaah will grant you even more.

A Seed of Maash

“Granny! Granny!” Anas shouted as he walked in with his father from the Isha salaah, “Please tell me a funny story.”

“Alright, dear!” Grandma replied, “I shall then tell you the story of the Maash.”

“What is Maash?” Anas asked.

“Maash is what the people in some areas call lentils,” she explained, “Would you like me to tell you the story.”

“Please do, Grandma!” Anas said.

“Well,” Grandma started, “there was a woman who lived a long time ago who had a husband called Shareef. However, everyone called him Sharfu. He was a very lazy and stingy man who was also very forgetful.

The women decided to cook some lentils one day, but had run out of it at home. She therefore asked her husband Sharfu to get her some from the bazaar.

“But the bazaar is so far away,” Sharfu replied, “I shall forget what I need when I reach there.”

“I have an idea,” his wife said, “Why don’t you repeat the words ‘Maash, maash, maash’ all the time while you are walking. You will then not forget what you need by the time you reach the grocery store.”

“That is an excellent idea,” Sharfu said. He therefore went off on his errand, repeating the words, “Maash, maash, maash…” all the while.

His path passed by a river bank, where a fisherman had cast his net and was waiting for it to fill with fish. All was quiet at the river until the silence was suddenly shattered by a loud voice saying, “Maash, maash, maash…”.

This sound gave the fisherman a shock and made him think that the net was filled with fish and he pulled in the large net with great difficulty. However, the net was still empty and the extra effort he needed to make was a waste. The fisherman therefore became angry with Sharfu for making the noise. He therefore got up from where he was, found Sharfu walking along the path and slapped him hard.

With his face red from the slap, Sharfu asked, “What is the matter with you? Why have you slapped me like this?”

“Because you keep shouting ‘Maash, maash, maash’!” the fisherman replied.

“Then what am I to say,” Sharfu asked.

“You had better say, ‘Seven eight big ones! Seven eight small ones! Seven eight big ones! Seven eight small ones!”

Forgetting what he was saying earlier, Sharfu then started to repeat the words, “Seven eight big ones! Seven eight small ones!”

He was saying this aloud, when he passed by some people who were attending funeral. Hearing what he was shouting aloud, one of the people at the funeral became angry because the words sounded like a prayer for seven eight big people dying and seven eight small people dying.

He therefore went up to Sharfu and slapped him hard. Holding his stinging cheek, Sharfu asked, “What is the matter with you? Why have you slapped me like this?”

“Because you keep shouting ‘Seven eight big ones! Seven eight small ones!” the man replied.

“Then what am I to say,” Sharfu asked.

“You had better say, ‘He was very good. May Allaah have mercy on him’”

Forgetting what he was saying earlier, Sharfu then started to repeat the words, “He was very good. May Allaah have mercy on him! He was very good. May Allaah have mercy on him!”

He was saying this aloud, when he passed by some people who were dragging the body of dead dog away. Hearing him repeat the words, “He was very good. May Allaah have mercy on him!” one of the men went up to him and slapped him.

Sharfu asked, “What is the matter with you? Why have you slapped me like this?”

“Because you keep shouting ‘He was very good. May Allaah have mercy on him!” the man replied, “Such du’aas are made for good people and not for dogs!”

“Then what am I to say,” Sharfu asked.

Standing next to the man was another man who spoke Arabic. The Arab man said, “*Laa Taqul Shay’an*. *Maash*!” This meant “Rather not say anything. Walk along!”

“Ah!” exclaimed Sharfu, relieved that the man had reminded him of what he needed to say, “That is exactly what I was saying all along.”

He then went off, repeating the words, “Maash, maash, maash!” Only this time, he took care not to speak the words too loud.

With these words on his lips, he went to the grocery store and got the lentil he needed. When he returned home safely, he was relieved not to have suffered any more slaps on this journey.

“Now was that a good story?” Grandma asked Anas.

“It certainly was, Grandma,” Anas replied gratefully.

“Well,” Grandma said, “It is now time for you to go to bed so that it would be easy for you to wake up early for the Fajr salaah.”

“Of course, Grandma,” Anas said as he went off to his room, “As Salaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh.”

Recognising the Truth

Rasulullaah ρ was in the Masjid one day with some Sahabah ψ like Hadhrat Umar bin Farooq τ, Hadhrat Talha bin Abaydullaah τ and Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik τ. Suddenly a tall man and fair man with black hair appeared and entered the Masjid holding the reins of his camel.

He sat the camel down in a corner and then approached Rasulullaah ρ, saying, "Which one of you is the son of Abdul Muttalib?"

"I am," Rasulullaah ρ replied.

"Is your name Muhammad?" he asked further.

"That is my name," came the reply.

"Look," the man continued, "I am a Bedouin and I need to ask some questions. Please do not be offended by my blunt manner of asking them."

Rasulullaah ρ smiled and said, "I won't. You may ask whatever you please and I will not be offended."

The man then asked, "O Muhammad ε! Your messenger had come to our tribe and informed us that you are the messenger of Allaah. Is that true?"

"That is the truth," Rasulullaah ρ confirmed.

"Who created the sky?" the man asked.

"Allaah," Rasulullaah ρ replied.

"Who created the earth?" the man asked.

"Allaah," Rasulullaah ρ replied.

"Who created the mountains?" the man asked.

"Allaah," Rasulullaah ρ replied.

The man then asked, "I ask you in the name of that Allaah Who created the sky, the earth and the mountains whether Allaah has really sent you as His messenger?"

Rasulullaah ρ replied, "Yes, He did."

The man asked further, "Your messenger has informed us that it is Fardh (obligatory) for us to perform five salaahs during every day and night. Is that true?"

"Yes, it is," Rasulullaah ρ replied.

He then repeated himself when he asked, "Did Allaah really command you to perform these salaahs?"

When Rasulullaah ρ reconfirmed this, he said, "Your messenger has informed us that it is Fardh (obligatory) for us to pay zakaah from our wealth once every year. Is that true?"

"Yes, it is," Rasulullaah ρ replied.

He then again repeated himself when he asked, "Did Allaah really give you this command?"

Rasulullaah ρ confirmed that Allaah had indeed given this command.

The man then continued. He said, "Your messenger has also commanded us to fast for an entire month of the year and informed us that it is Fardh (obligatory) to perform Hajj of the *Baytullaah* once in a lifetime if a person has the ability and means to do so. Is this true?"

"Yes, it is," Rasulullaah ρ replied.

He then asked Rasulullaah ρ to recite the Kalimah and he repeated it. Thereafter, he said, "O Rasool of Allaah ρ! My tribe has sent me as their representative. My name is Dimaam bin Tha'laba. I swear by the Being Who has sent you as His messenger that I shall do exactly as you have commanded, without adding to it or omitting anything from it."

He then greeted Rasulullaah ρ with the utmost respect and left. Rasulullaah ρ remarked, "If that man is true to his word, then he will certainly enter Jannah."

Dear friends! Do you know who this Dimaam bin Tha'laba τ was? He was a very handsome man, who was also regarded as the intellectual of his tribe. He was amongst the leaders of the Banu Sa'd tribe and remained aloof from the evils that the Arabs were involved in during those times.

As soon as Hadhrat Dimaam bin Tha'laba τ reached his tribesmen, they asked him what had happened in Madinah. He immediately said, "May Laat and Uzza be humiliated!"

Regarding this as the worst of statements, the people warned, "Dimaam! Hold your tongue, otherwise Laat and Uzza will afflict you with calamities like leprosy and insanity. Repent immediately or we shall all suffer with you."

However, Hadhrat Dimaam τ had already recited the Kalimah, met with Rasulullaah ρ and had therefore become a fountainhead of Imaan. He said, "Dear people! Listen well to what I have to say. Laat and Uzza are mere stones that can neither harm anyone nor do them any good. I am disappointed in you people for worshipping stones, whereas the only being worthy of worship is Allaah. Allaah has sent Muhammad ε as His messenger and revealed His Book to him. That Book is a source of guidance and goodness and by practising on its teachings you will be able to free yourselves from the darkness and misguided ways that you are drowning in. Accept what I say and believe in Allaah and in Rasulullaah ρ. Your success lies in this. On the other hand, if you refuse to believe, you will be headed for destruction. I have already enquired from Rasulullaah ρ about everything that is to be done and that is to be avoided."

These words of Hadhrat Dimaam τ affected the hearts of the people so much that by the same evening every one of the people of his tribe accepted Islaam.

Dear friends! It is a fact that benefit, harm, success, failure, honour and disgrace all lie in Allaah's hand. Everything and everyone need

Allaah and can do nothing without His assistance. We should therefore obey Allaah Alone and follow the ways shown to us by Rasulullaah ρ.

Question 10: What is the largest river in the India Subcontinent and how long is it?

Answer 10: ....

Question 11: Which is the largest airport in the world and where is it located?

Answer 11: ....

Question 12: Which country in the world has no rivers?

Answer 12: ....

Riddles

7.

You will see it crying whenever it arrives
And you will never see it smile.
What is it?

8.

A utensil full of rubies
You will see it hanging upside down.
What is it?

Please do Not Laugh

❁ A villager was taking his child on a tour of the zoo when they passed by the zebra's enclosure.

"Look Dad!" the boy shouted, "The caretakers have put a sweater on that horse."

❁ Someone asked a judge, "Is the pista sweetmeat tastier or the almond sweetmeat?"

The judge replied, "Since we need to make a just decision, you will have to bring both before me to taste. Only then can I pass good judgment."

Success

I am an Iranian boy living in Jiyan, which is a little town in Isfahaan. My father is a landlord in the town and the wealthiest men of the area. He also owns the largest house in the town. He always had great love for me and this love continued to grow with time.

With much effort I acquired the knowledge of the religion of my forefathers and soon became a religious leader. As a fire worshipper, the task was soon given to me to ensure that the great fire we made always remained burning. I therefore did not allow it to die down for even a moment during the day and night.

As a landlord, my father often visited the villages to check on his properties. However, he was unable to do so on one occasion and asked me to do it for him. It was on the trip to one of the villages that I happened to pass by Christian church. I was attracted inside by the worship they were engaged in. Since my father had always prohibited me from mixing with other people, I had never been in contact with other religions in my life.

When I observed their manner of worship, I was very impressed and inclined to be part of this religion. I said to myself, "By Allaah! Their religion is better than mine."

I therefore remained with them until sunset. When I asked them where the source of their religion was, they informed me that it was in Shaam.

That night I informed my father about the people I had met and that I found their religion to be very impressive. My father was shocked to hear about this and said, "There is nothing good in their religion. The best religion is the one of your father and forefathers."

However, I adamantly said, "By Allaah! Their religion is better than ours."

Hearing this, my father feared that I should not forsake my religion. He therefore kept me prisoner in our house and bound my hands and legs

with chains. However, I soon got news of a caravan heading for Shaam and somehow managed to free myself and join them.

When we reached Shaam, I asked them to lead me to someone who was most learned in the Christian religion. They guided me to a priest who tended to one of the churches, describing him as the best of all Christians.

I then approached the priest and asked, "I like the Christian religion and am willing to stay with you to learn about it and to worship with you."

He accepted my request and I started to live with him and serve him. However, it was not long afterwards that I realised he was not really the best of people. He used to take the wealth of the people for himself and tell them that they would receive great rewards from Allaah for spending it. In fact, he had filled seven earthen pots with gold.

His behaviour disgusted me. When he died and people were busy with his funeral preparations, I informed them about what the priest had been doing and even showed them the stored gold. They became so enraged by this that instead of burying him normally, they hung his body on a cross and pelted it with stones.

Thereafter, the people appointed another priest in his place, who was a very pious man. I lived with him and served him. When he was about to die, I asked him, "Whom should I go to after you die."

He then directed me to a priest in Mosul and it was there that I travelled after he died. There I informed the priest that the previous one had instructed me to stay with him and to serve him. I added, "He also told me that apart from you there is none left who follows this religion."

He then allowed me to stay with him and I found him to be a most excellent person. Unfortunately, I could not be with him for very long because he soon fell ill and lay on his deathbed. As he lay there, I asked, "Sir! You know well my situation. Now that you are leaving this world, will you please advise me where to go and with whom should I stay."

He replied, "My son! I swear by Allaah that I know of no one better for you than a man living in Naseebeen. Apart from him there is none I know of who still practises our religion as we do. Go to him and stay there with him."

After the funeral of this priest in Mosul, I then proceeded to Naseebeen, where I informed the priest there about what had transpired. He graciously allowed me to stay with him, and I found him to be as pious and abstinent as the previous two priests. However, I did also get to stay with him for very long because the time came very soon when he also prepared to leave this world.

It was then that I asked him also to advise me on my way forward. He replied, "Dear son! I know of only one person who is still practising the religion as we know it. He is in Amooriyah, so go there after I die."

Consequently, it was to Amooriyah that I found myself next. I explained my situation to him as I did to all of them and he also permitted me to stay with him. By Allaah! He was just like the others and I benefitted greatly from him. Here I even had the opportunity of raising some goats and cows.

Eventually when he was also leaving this world, I said to him, "Sir! You know well my situation. Now that you are leaving this world, will you please advise me where to go and with whom should I stay."

He replied, "My son! I swear by Allaah that I know of no one who still practises our religion as we do. However, the time is near for a Nabi to rise in Arabia, who will be practising the religion of Ibraheem υ. You therefore need to go to a place where there are date palms orchards located between dry and black rocks. Amongst the signs of this Nabi is that he will accept gifts, but not Sadaqah and there will be a seal of prophethood between his shoulders. If possible, do go to this place."

After he had passed away, I stayed on in Amooriyah for a while until I one day met some Arab traders from the Banu Kalb tribe. I said to them, "If you people permit me to travel with you to Arabia, I shall give you all my cows and goats."

They agreed and I handed over the animals to them. However, when we reached a place called Waadil Qura, which was between Madinah

and Shaam, they betrayed me and sold me as a slave to a Jew. I was therefore forced to serve this Jewish man.

One day, the Jew's nephew came to visit him and decided to purchase me. When the deal was done, he took me along with him to Madinah. It was there that I saw the date palms orchards located between dry and black rocks, as the priest in Amooriyah had mentioned.

Rasulullaah ρ was still in Makkah when I started to serve my new master in Madinah. Because I was so engrossed in serving my master, I did not get any opportunity to make enquiries about Rasulullaah ρ. The time eventually came when Rasulullaah ρ emigrated to Madinah.

I had been sitting on a date palm, doing some work one day, when someone from my master's tribe arrived there and said to him, "May Allaah destroy the Aws and Khazraj tribes! They have all gone to Quba to welcome a man from Makkah who claims to be a Nabi."

As soon as I heard this, my body started to shiver and I almost fell from the tree. I therefore got off the tree and asked the man to repeat to me what he had just said. This made my master so angry that he slapped me and said, "What has it got to do with you? Get back to work!"

That evening I took along some dates and went to see Rasulullaah ρ. I presented the dates to him, saying, "I have heard that you are very good man and have come on a long journey with some companions. I have these dates as Sadaqah and think that you and your companions deserve it most. Please do accept them from me."

Rasulullaah ρ took the dates and served it to his companions without having any for himself. "This is the first sign," I said to myself.

I then went back and it was after Rasulullaah ρ came to Madinah from Quba that I again took some dates to him. This time I told him that the dates were a gift from me and not Sadaqah. This time, Rasulullaah ρ ate from the dates and shared it with others as well. "This is the second sign," I said to myself.

When I went to Rasulullaah ρ on the third occasion, he was attending a funeral at Jannatul Baqee. Rasulullaah ρ was sitting down at the time,

so after greeting him, I walked behind him to see whether I could get a glimpse of the seal of prophethood on his back. When Rasulullaah ρ saw me doing this, he knew exactly what I was trying to do, so he removed his upper garment. I immediately recognised this to be the seal described to me and I bent down to kiss it.

I could not control the tears of joy that flowed down my cheeks at the time. When Rasulullaah ρ asked me why I wept so much, I related my story to him. The Sahabah ψ listening to me were also overcome with emotion when they heard my story.

Dear friends! Do you know whose story we have just read. It is the story of Hadhrat Salmaan Faarsi τ, who spent all his life in search of the truth. He persevered with his search even though he had to suffer slavery. Eventually, he found success.

We also need to follow in the footsteps of the Sahabah ψ and constantly remain searching for the truth and practising on the truth.

The Pencil Case

“What is this?” the boys said to each other as they bent down over the object covered in mud.

“This looks like a pencil case,” Khaalid said as he lifted it from the mud.

Khaalid and Farhaan had just left the school grounds, which was covered in mud because of the rain. “This looks like Kamraan’s case,” Khaalid as he wiped the mud from it.

Because Kamraan had always boasted about his pencil case, the boys decided to keep it without telling him that they had found it.

“You won’t be telling him, will you?” Farhaan asked Khaalid.

“Of course not! We can both use it,” Khaalid replied.

Farhaan then cleaned the case at home and put it in his bag. The boys were both in the fifth grade at school and were very naughty. Since they often took other people’s things without permission, it was no surprise that they decided to keep this pencil case because they hated Kamraan.

It was only a few days earlier that Kamraan showed the class the new pencil case that his father bought for him. This made Khaalid and Farhaan very jealous and they whispered, “Look how much he is boasting!”

The following day, Kamraan was crying in class. “What is the matter?” the teacher asked.

“The pencil case my father bought me fell out of my bag and is lost,” he sobbed.

“Good children don’t cry,” the teacher said as he tried to console him, “Inshaa Allaah, we shall find it.”

For a fleeting moment, Khaalid's heart softened with the crying and he thought about admitting that he had found case. However, lying had hardened his heart and he decided not to tell the truth.

"Did anyone see Kamraan's pencil case?" the teacher asked.

Although the teacher asked every child, both Khaalid and Farhaan decided not to speak the truth. When the teacher received no response, he said to Kamraan, "You must continue to make du'aa to Allaah to get your pencil case back. The du'aa to recite is '*Innaa Lillaahi wa Innaa Ilayhi Raaji'oon*'. Inshaa Allaah, you will get it back."

The teacher had just finished teaching Kamraan the du'aa when the period ended and he had to leave. With nothing else to do, Kamraan receipted the du'aa over and over again. He was so sad that he did not even go out of the classroom for recess.

Two days later Khaalid and Farhaan were walking back home when they were suddenly confronted by Kamraan. They were shocked to see him and wondered whether he knew anything.

"As Salaamu Alaykum," Kamraan said with his hand outstretched.

"Wa Alaykum Salaam," the two replied as they shook his hand.

"He is not going to ask for his pencil case," Khaalid thought. However, Kamraan said nothing of the sort and only asked how they were. He then left for home.

As they stood looking at him leave, the grip of lying lost its grip over their hearts and they thought for a moment, "It is wrong to take someone else's property and to make them worry. We ought to return his pencil case."

However, just as quickly as it had come, the thought then vanished as the two renewed their resolve to lie. At the same time, Shaytaan whispered into their hearts, "If you return the pencil case now, everyone will know that you are thieves and you will be disgraced. Rather keep the pencil case and decide not to steal in future."

They therefore kept the pencil case at home and continued their days as normal, until a month had passed. In the meantime, the sadness Kamraan felt was growing less. He also continued reciting the du'aa that his teacher had taught them.

The time soon came for examinations and the children were too busy to worry about much else. One day, as Khaalid and Farhaan were leaving the Masjid after salaah, an old man with a bright face called them.

"Are you boys in school?" he asked.

"Oh yes, we are," Khaalid replied.

"Then you must be busy with the examinations," he said.

This time Farhaan replied. He said, "Oh yes, we are. There is only a week left for the exams to start."

The man was so pleasant and nice to speak with that the boys did not mind talking to him. As they spoke, they did not even realise that he had brought them back inside the Masjid.

"Why don't you boys sit down awhile with this group of people," the old man said, "They are busy reading about the Sahabah ψ."

"Alright," the boys said, looking at each other, "I suppose we can spare some time for that."

Sitting down behind the other people, Khaalid noticed how respectfully the others were sitting and listening. The boys therefore also sat like the others and listened.

The man read:

"Hadhrat Ka'b τ relates his own account in detail, which is related very often in the books of Ahadeeth. He says, "I had never felt better or been as wealthy as I was at the time of the Tabook expedition. I had two camels of my own, which I had never possessed before. Although each morning I intended to make preparations for the journey, this never came to pass for some reason or another and many days passed

like this. Because I had the means at my disposal, I was confident that I would be ready at short notice as soon I needed to leave. Eventually, I had still not made any preparations when Rasulullaah ρ left with the Muslims. All the while, I was still telling myself that I be ready in a day or two and catch up with the army. When I looked around Madinah, I discovered that only were still present who were condemned to be Munaafiqeen or people who had been excused for valid reasons.

When after a few days I heard that Rasulullaah ρ was returning, I was struck with grief and remorse. I started to worry and thought up excuses, thinking that one of them would abate Rasulullaah ρ's anger long enough for me to later seek his pardon. I also consulted the people of my family, but when Rasulullaah ρ arrived, I was convinced that nothing but the truth would save me. I therefore decided to speak only the truth.

When I came before him, Rasulullaah ρ asked, "What prevented you? Had you not already purchased the camels?" "O Rasulullaah ρ!" I replied, "If I were addressing a man of this world right now, I would have certainly averted displeasure with some believable excuse because Allaah has blessed me with the ability of convincing people. However, I am sure that if I please you with a lie, Allaah would be displeased with me. On the other hand, I am sure that if I displease you with the truth, Allaah would very soon cool your anger. I shall therefore state only the truth.

By Allaah, I had no excuse whatsoever. I had never been so well to do as I was at the time. "He is speaking the truth," Rasulullaah ρ acknowledged. He then said to me, "You may leave. Allaah will decide your fate."

Khaalid and Farhaan were already starting to feel uneasy with what they had done. The man reading the book stopped to take a few sips of water, giving the boys some time to think hard about what they ought to do. When he was done, the man read further:

Hadhrat Ka'b τ related further, "When I asked if there were any more people like me, I was told that there were two other persons who had also confessed like me and received the same reply from Rasulullaah ρ.

Complying with the instructions from Rasulullaah ρ, the Sahabah ψ boycotted us completely. Nobody was prepared to mix with or even speak to us. It seemed as if I were living in a foreign land. Even my bosom friends behaved like strangers and, despite its vastness, the earth had narrowed for me. What worried me most was that Rasulullaah ρ would not lead my funeral prayer if I died in this condition, and if Rasulullaah ρ happened to pass away in the meantime, I would be doomed forever. None would ever to talk to me and there would be none to pray at my funeral.

My other two companions stayed indoors all the time. Being the most able-bodied of us, I would still go to the marketplace and join the salaah in Jamaa'ah. However, nobody would talk to me.

On the morning that the ban had reached its fiftieth day, I had performed my Fajr salaah and was sitting on the roof of my house in complete depression. The earth had really narrowed for me and life had become too difficult to bear. It was then that I heard a caller announce from the top of the mount Sila, "Good news for you, O Ka'b!" As soon as I heard this, I fell prostrate on the ground and tears of joy streamed down my cheeks, for I knew that it was now all over.

When I entered the Masjid, the people sitting with Rasulullaah ρ ran to congratulate me. When I then greeted Rasulullaah ρ I found his face radiant with joy and whenever this happened, his face appeared as bright as the full moon. I said, "O Rasulullaah ρ! To complete the acceptance of my repentance, I wish to give away in Sadaqah all that I possess."

Rasulullaah ρ said, "This will be too much. Keep something for yourself." I therefore kept my share of the booty that we received in the Khaybar expedition." Since it was the truth that brought me salvation, I am shall speak nothing but the truth in future."

Although the man continued to recite further, both Khaalid and Farhaan were thinking about something else. They then joined as the man made du'aa and, when the du'aa was over, they looked at each other without saying anything and left. They both were thinking of defeating their will to lie and to always speak the truth.

The following day saw both Khaalid and Farhaan sitting in front of the headmaster in his office. As the headmaster thought what to do with them, the boys were at ease. They had repented to Allaah and resolved never to take anything without permission. They knew that Allaah would help them once they had decided to turn to Him.

It was then that Kamraan suddenly entered the office and greeted with the words, "As Salaamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuh!"

"Wa Alaykumus Salaam," the headmaster replied as he showed Kamraan the chair to sit on. Kamraan sat down quietly next to Khaalid.

The headmaster then looked at Khaalid, who immediately realised what the headmaster meant. Khaalid therefore turned to Kamraan and said, "Do you remember your pencil case that got lost?"

"Yes, yes. Of course," Kamraan replied.

"Well," Khaalid explained, "We happened to find it, but we kept is hidden from you. We have now realised how wrong we were. Because lying had taken a grip on our hearts, we did not speak the truth when our teacher asked us about it."

He then took out the pencil case and handed it to Kamraan, saying, "Here is your pencil case. Please take it and forgive us for what we did."

Kamraan was overjoyed and turned his pencil case from side to side as he looked at it. The headmaster smiled when he saw this.

Kamraan then opened his bag and took out two identical pencil cases. He gave one to Khaalid and the other to Farhaan. He then said, "Yesterday my father bought me another pencil case. I then told him to get me another two to give as gifts to my two friends. These are the two that I brought to school for you today. Please accept them as gifts from me. What has passed is now over. We need to defeat Shaytaan and will only make him happier if we are not friends anymore."

Khaalid and Farhaan both jumped up and hugged Kamraan.

Dear friends! We need to learn from this the importance of always speaking the truth and to never rely on lies. Speaking the truth always brings peace of mind and happiness, whereas lying adds to a person's worries and depression.

Rasulullaah ρ once said, "Always speak the truth even if it appears to lead to your destruction. There will certainly be success in this. You should also always refrain from lying even if it appears to lead to success. There will certainly be destruction in this."[1]

We should all therefore make a firm resolve to always speak the truth and to refrain from lying at all costs.

[1] *Kanzul Ummaal* (Vol.3 Pg.139).

Question 13: In which country do the bees produce sour honey?

Answer 13: ....

Question 14: Do you know how butterflies extract nectar from flowers?

Answer 14: ....

Question 15: Which animal cannot stretch its tongue out of its mouth?

Answer 15: ....

Riddles

9.

It does not burn nor does it burn anything else
Yet it gives light.
What is it?

10.

It comes to do what it pleases
Yet all who see it will hit it.
What is it?

Please do Not Laugh

❁ When father brought some of the cow's entrails to cook, someone asked the little son what it was.

Looking at the entrails, he immediately said, "It's the cow's towel."

❁ A man once saw a notice by the road, which read, "The writer is intelligent, while the reader is an idiot."

The man was angered by this, so he decided to alter the first words of the sign. It then read, "The reader is intelligent, while the writer is an idiot."

Answers to the Priceless Treasure Questions

1. The last act that Rasulullaah ρ did before he passed away was to use the Miswaak
2. Rasulullaah ρ was on his camel when he delivered the sermon during the Hajjatul Widaa. The camel's name was Qaswa.
3. The blessed name of Rasulullaah ρ appears four times in the Qur'aan.
4. Hadhrat Ammaar bin Yaasir τ built the first Masjid in Islaam at Quba.
5. The Sahabi was Hadhrat Zaid bin Haaritha τ, whose name is mentioned in verse 37 of Surah Ahzaab, which is in the 22nd Para.
6. This honour was granted to Hadhrat Abu Bakr τ.
7. Hadhrat Amr bin Al Aas τ conquered Egypt.
8. The first Muslim navy sailed during the reign of Hadhrat Mu'aawiya τ
9. The real name of Sultaan Tipu was Fatah Ali and the word Tipu means 'lion'.
10. The Sindh River (Indus River) is the longest river in the Indo-Pak subcontinent, with a length of 1900 miles.
11. The largest airport in the world is the King Khalid International airport in Riyadh.
12. Kuwait is the only country in the world without any rivers
13. The bees in Brazil produce sour honey.
14. Butterflies extract nectar with their legs.
15. The crocodile cannot stretch its tongue out of its mouth.

Answers to Riddles

1. The Qur'aan
2. Fasting
3. A Tasbeeh
4. Du’aa
5. A pen
6. An aeroplane
7. Rain
8. A pomegranate
9. A glow worm
10. A mosquito

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Zill Qadah 1432—October 2011